

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

JAN 8 1979

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

## NAME

HISTORIC

Rahilly, Patrick Henry, House

AND/OR COMMON

Rahilly, Patrick Henry, House

## LOCATION

STREET &amp; NUMBER

3 mi. W of Lake City on  
County Road 15 -- three miles  
west of Lake City

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Lake City

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
First

STATE

Minnesota

CODE

22

COUNTY

Wabasha

CODE

157

## CLASSIFICATION

## CATEGORY

DISTRICT

☒ BUILDING(S)

STRUCTURE

SITE

OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC

☒ PRIVATE

BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

IN PROCESS

BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

OCCUPIED

☒ UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

☒ NO

## PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

COMMERCIAL

PARK

EDUCATIONAL

☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

MILITARY

OTHER:

## OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Minnesota Historical Society

STREET &amp; NUMBER

690 Cedar Street

CITY, TOWN

St. Paul

VICINITY OF

STATE

Minnesota

## LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Wabasha County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Wabasha

STATE

Minnesota

## REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Statewide Historic Sites Survey

DATE

September 1972

FEDERAL ☒ STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

240 Summit Avenue-Hill House

CITY, TOWN

St. Paul

STATE

Minnesota

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Rahilly House is located at the end of an avenue of elms on County Road 15, three miles west of Lake City in Wabasha County. In 1880 Patrick Henry Rahilly, an early capitalist in the Lake City area, built this stately Italian villa residence. This mansion is patterned after an earlier residence in Rochester -- an imposing red brick mass known as the Brackenridge mansion.

The Rahilly House is a grand two story structure constructed from local red brick. Typical of the Italian villa style of architecture that flourished in the late 1800s the exterior of this mansion boasts extended eaves supported by decorative brackets, windows and doors set in rounded arches, a belvedere and a dignified piazza that surrounds the ground floor of the residence.

The main front entry is through double doors with elaborate decorative glass panels. These doors open into a magnificent reception hall from which a wide staircase leads to the second floor. There are twelve rooms of which five are on the first floor and seven on the second. The first floor contains a parlor to the left of the reception hall, a drawing room to the right of the reception hall, a library, dining room, a kitchen which retains its original plumbing fixtures including a hand water pump, and a bath. Entrance is gained from room to room through sliding mahogany doors which extend from the floor to the ceiling. The second floor contains five bedrooms, a sitting room, and maid's quarters, all accessible from a central hallway. In addition there is a dirt floored basement and an attic which provides access to the belvedere. The original carriage house is extant and is located to the southwest of the residence.

Of particular note throughout the interior of the residence are the four ornate marble fireplaces, fifteen foot ceilings, glassed-in bookcases, baroque plaster scrollwork panels from which the original lighting fixtures hang, and mahogany woodwork.

The Rahilly House is considered a prototype of Italian villa architecture and representative of Southern Minnesota's agricultural boom in the late 19th century. Alterations to the residence have not been made since its construction. The residence is in an excellent state of preservation.

In addition to the Rahilly House itself, several additional elements are included within the boundaries of the estate-proper. These elements include a two story brick carriage house, two root cellars, formal gardens to the front and rear of the main house, and a tree-lined road leading from a stone wall at County Road #15 to the main house.

The carriage house is executed of similar design and material to the main house. It is two stories in height with quarters for servants on the second floor. A one-story ell is attached to the two-story section. Both sections have double garage-type doors. Openings are segmentally-arched, and windows boast corbelled brick sills.

The cellars are presently in a deteriorated condition and are unused. The formal gardens to the front and rear of the main house have been neglected for a number of years, although remnants of the historic plan and plantings survive.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1880-present

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Patrick Henry Rahilly was born in 1833 near Limerick, Ireland. He came to the United States when he was sixteen, worked in Pennsylvania and New York as a farmhand and then, in 1854, arrived in Rochester, Minnesota. While in Rochester (1854-1860) Rahilly was employed by the Honorable William D. Lowery, an early capitalist who was then operating a large farm, as well as conducting a mercantile interest and a banking business. Rahilly proved very capable. Lowery put him in charge of his farming interests, then brought him into his mercantile and banking operations. In addition Rahilly handled the business and monetary interests of Rochester's wealthiest residents. Rahilly moved to Mr. Pleasant near Lake City in 1860 and began to accumulate vast land holdings.

On this piece of property Rahilly first built a large Greek Revival house, but when it burned in March, 1879, he drew out of his memory the red brick mass of the Brackenridge mansion which had been the pride of Rochester in the days of his impecunious, immigrant youth.<sup>1</sup> The house he then built in the summer of 1880 is very much like old pictures of his model: tall, stately, with high ceilings, an arcade of windows set in rounded arches and surrounded by a dignified piazza.

By the 1880s Rahilly owned and operated over 1200 acres of farmland -- he was considered the most extensive farmer and stock-raiser in Wabasha County. He also had extensive interests on the Mesaba and Vermillion iron ranges in northern Minnesota and pine lands in Oregon.

Besides Rahilly's farming interests he was also very active in the political life of his community and state. He was a representative in the legislatures of 1874 and 1878. He served as a state senator in the 1880 legislature.

The significance of the Rahilly House lies both in its association with one of southern Minnesota's earliest and most successful capitalists and farmers and in the architectural style which it represents. The mansion is unique in its location and setting. Although the Italian villa style of residential architecture flourished throughout the southern half of Minnesota in the late 1880s Italian villa residences were almost exclusively located in growing river towns such as St. Paul, Winona, Hastings, and Red Wing. The location of the Italian villa Rahilly House in a totally rural and agricultural setting marks it as both unique and significant.

1. Roger Kennedy, Minnesota Houses, p. 149.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Andreas, Historical Atlas of Minnesota, (Chicago: 1874).  
Clemens, Jeremiah and Williams, J. Fletcher, The United States Biographical Dictionary and Portrait Gallery of Eminent and Self-made Men, Minnesota Volume, 1879.  
History of Wabasha County, (Chicago: 1884).  
Kennedy, Roger, Minnesota Houses, (Mpls.: 1967).  
Upham, Warren, Minnesota Biographies, 1655-1912 -- Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society, vol. XIV, (St. Paul: 1912).

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 19.3

QUADRANGLE NAME \_\_\_\_\_

QUADRANGLE SCALE \_\_\_\_\_

UTM REFERENCES

D 1,5 5,5,1,4,4,0 4,9,1,7,5,8,0

A 1,5 5,5,1,9,2,0 4,9,1,7,6,2,0

ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
B 1,5 5,5,1,9,2,0 4,9,1,7,4,4,0

ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
C 1,5 5,5,1,4,4,0 4,9,1,7,4,0,0

E                              

F                              

G                              

H                              

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Lynne VanBrocklin, Survey Specialist/amended by Michael Landis, 1978

ORGANIZATION

Minnesota Historical Society

DATE

1974/1978

STREET & NUMBER

240 Summit Avenue-Hill House

TELEPHONE

(612) 296-9070/726-1171

CITY OR TOWN

St. Paul

STATE

Minnesota

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

Russell W. Fridley

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

12/27/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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RECEIVED JAN 8 1979  
DATE ENTERED

Patrick Henry Rahilly House

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

The Patrick Henry Rahilly estate is located in Sections 22 and 23 of Twp. 111 North and Range 13 West, Wabasha County, Minnesota, and is described as follows:

Beginning on the north section line at the section corner common to sections 22 and 23; thence easterly along this north section line a distance of 300 feet; thence southerly at a 90 degree angle to the said north section line a distance of 600 feet; thence westerly in a parallel direction to said north section line a distance of 1400 feet; thence at a 90 degree angle to said north section line a distance of 600 feet; thence easterly along the north section line of sections 22 and 23 a distance of 1100 feet to the point of beginning. This tract contains a total of 19.3 acres.